

THE
FATAL SECRET;
OR,
TRUTH DISGUISED.
A
TRAGEDY.

Written by MATTHEW NIMMO.

"Memoria Excelendo Augetur."

First Edition.

D U N D E E,

Printed by T. COLVILL, for the Author.

MDCCXCH.

*Collated
&
Perfect.
J. H. 1895.*

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears in the records of the Court.

Witness my hand and seal this 1st day of January, 1907.

Notary Public for the State of New York.

My Commission Expires the 1st day of January, 1908.

DEDICATION.

THIS Work is humbly dedicated to the Subscribers by the Author; and he expects their criticism will not be severe, as it is the first he ever had the honour of presenting to them: and if it gains their protection, he will soon present to them another piece, which he hopes they will patronize; but if they do not,

“ He shall his *safety* to his *weakness* owe,
“ As grass escapes the *scythe* by being low.”

The Author expects no critic will think the following pages worth his while to criticize; but if they should, he will owe his *safety* to his *weakness*.—The Author is, with respect, the Subscribers

most obliged, and

most humble servant,

M. NIMMO.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

ROTLAND, King of Morocco.

MULYZEDEN, Prince of Fez.

FERDINAND.

ABDOMOR.

MALDINY and } two Lords of Fez.
FLOREZ, }

W O M E N.

ZATILDA and } two Princesses of Morocco.
BELRAIZIA, }

Senators, Citizens, Attendants, &c.

SCENE lies in **MOROCCO**.

THE
FATAL SECRET;

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ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter MALDINEY and FLOREZ.

MALDINEY.

PRODIGIES do now so often in this varying life occur, that instead of striking awe into the mind of man, they make him more hardy, resolute, and bold.

Flo. Right, my Lord: But since you arrived at this court, have you not heard some news about the changes that has happened? Our royal Prince intends to marry Belraizia, daughter to Ferdinand, brother to the present King of Morocco.

Mal. How comes that to be? Has his royal father, the king of Fez, been informed of it?

Flo. Yes; and when his son returns with his virtuous spouse, he is to retire from all the hurry of the world, and let the management fall on our prince; and also to resign to them his crown. Her father, and the King his brother, has approved of the proposals, and think themselves so honoured by them, that they have enjoined Belraizia to treat Mulyzedén as a prince to whose professions of love she is infinitely obliged.

Mal. Yet there appears to be something mysterious in this sudden marriage. Knowest thou not the vow that has passed between our prince and Abdomor, who from their infancy have been united together; and so

A3

consolidated

consolidated was their friendship, that fearing marriage might sometime or other occasion an interruption, if not a total breach of that bond which both desired should be indissoluble, they had mutually vowed never to wed, but with the approbation of each other: Now has not Mulyzeden broke that bond? And——

Flo. Stop; you injure our prince; for he had so sacred a regard to his promise in this affair, that as soon as he had obtained the consent of the king of Fez, the king of Morocco, and of Ferdinand, to make Belraizia his, he dispatched a messenger to Abdomor, with an account of the progress he had made, entreating the presence of that dear favourite.

Mal. And is he arrived?

Flo. Yes, and has consented to his prince's marriage with Belraizia.

Mal. Now, my Lord, I am satisfied about the integrity of our prince. Doubts and fears formerly warred in my mind about the respect he paid to an oath. His honesty I then suspected, but from my soul I do acquit him; and since he has given this instance of his honour, I shall give him a thousand marks of my loyalty; I will guard his sacred person from every attack which malice or private foes can invent, and from every snare which coward villains can devise.

Flo. If every subject were as true, and to the interest of their country as firmly attached, seldom would a tyrant usurp the throne, or villains grasp at power.

Mal. The ties of nature, and the laws of their country, should bind them over to her cause; and if they are not subtle villains, their own safety must urge them to defend her rights.

Flo. A subtle villain is not devoted to his friend; he will not scruple to sacrifice his country to his ambition, and in the effort he will hazard his life, provided circumstances conspire to render his treason successful. The abettors of sedition generally ascribe their intentions to some cause foreign to the real one, that under a plausible pretext they may subvert the established government. The distressing consequences of their conspiracy commonly

Or, TRUTH DISGUISED.

7

monly affect all rank of citizens, but particularly those who were initiate to them. [Exit.

SCENE II.

Open and discovers ZATILDA seated in a careless posture.

Enter BELRAIZIA.

Belrai. Why, Zatilda, do these tears, these rebel tears, run in such torrents down your tender cheeks? Is this hour of rejoicing to be changed into an age of sadness? Oh, tell me the cause!

Zatil. Pity me! pity me! Belraizia, dearest cousin, pity me.

Belrai. Be comforted, dear princess; cheer thy sad spirits—away with these tears, their drops belong to woe!

Zatil. It is to them that I must apply. Good Heaven, when will thou put a period to my existence, that from sorrow I may be freed!

Belrai. If you, dear Zatilda, will not be consoled, oh, reveal to me what disturbs your panting breast, and what foul fiend it is that thus torments your soul.

Zatil. Press me no more: Heaven and earth cannot relieve me from the calamity that is now impending; why then should I afflict you with the knowledge of it?

Belrai. I love you, Zatilda, and cannot bear to see you thus, and yet be ignorant of the cause. Here I conjure you by all the friendship we have had together, to communicate to me the cruel secret of your sorrows.

Zatil. I cannot, must not, dare not tell!

Belrai. Oh, Heavens! what can have happened to Zatilda, that I must not know? Nay, I think you said you dare not tell; and I have just cause to fear that you doubt my friendship, if you deny me the melancholy happiness of participating in your grief.

Zatil. No, you have not any cause to complain. Fate is about to give you all you can desire; therefore I will not detain you from the presence of the prince who adores you, and whom you justly esteem. I sent for you to take my last farewell; for be assured I'll not survive
this

this night! No, I will never see to-morrow's hated dawn. This night will put an end to my cursed shame and misery!

Belrai. Oh, Zatilda! Zatilda!

Zatil. I see how nearly the despair you found me in has touched you; pardon it, I beseech you, it is the last trouble you will ever receive from the unfortunate Zatilda. Remember me, I conjure you; and when possessed of all your soul is fond of in Mulyzeden's court, remember that he cannot love you more than I have done. Go; I will no longer afflict you with the sight of woe, when it is not in your power to apply a remedy: Go, and be blessed with Mulyzeden.

Belrai. It is impossible for me to experience felicity, when Zatilda refuses to be partaker. That prince you speak of, deserving as he is, had never the power to rival you in my affection; nor shall my father, my uncle, his ardent passion, or my vows, oblige me to become his wife, if you approve not of it.

Enter ROTLAND.

Rot. How does my daughter fare?

Zatil. Thanks to my father and king.

Rot. Belraizza, the prince of Fez depends on the performance of your promise of marrying him to-morrow.

Belrai. With the permission of your majesty, I will defer it till the princess shall be recovered, so as to be witness of the ceremony.

Rot. I thank you for the care and concern you take of my daughter; and if your father and the prince be pleased to defer it, I will not oppose what you desire: mean time I will inform them of your request. *[Exit.]*

Zatil. What is it you mean, by requesting to delay the marriage?

Belrai. I mean, by prolonging time, to shift it off entirely.

Zatil. How; is it then possible you do not love him?

Belrai. Not half enough to make you unhappy.

Zatil. And are you resolved to continue always so?

Belrai. Neither force nor entreaty shall prevail on me to make you miserable by my yielding to be his wife.

No,

Or, TRUTH DISGUISED.

9

No, that shall never be the case. Let us now leave it to time and chance to work for you, in changing the sentiments the prince has for me to your advantage. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

Enter BELRAIZIA solus.

Strike me, ye thunders! blast me, ye lightnings! for now my doom is past, and my ruin is inevitable! I must be miserable: I have given up all claim to Mulyzedén; I cannot now be his wife; I cannot share with him in the enjoyment of the crown of Fez. No! these are vanished; that delicious hope is fled, and for ever I will quit that thought: I cannot, nor dare I presume to break the promise which I made to Zatilda; for that, instead of washing the stain, would the more blacken and aggravate my guilt. I am now resolved, and all the powers of hell combined shall not make me revoke; and tho' my lips declare for Mulyzedén, yet my heart shall be for Zatilda.

Enter MULYZEDÉN.

Muly. Can you then, Belraizia, at the expence of your future quiet, resolve to delay me the bliss of enjoying that exhaustless store which must be for ever found in the possession of your charms? Oh, inform me of the cruel reason.

Belrai. As obvious is the reason as the cause. I only want to delay the nuptials till the princess Zatilda is recovered; and until then I cannot accept of your proposals, however honourable they be.

Muly. Lovers are always industrious to torment themselves; and I imagine it is by your desire Zatilda counterfeits her distress, on purpose to be an excuse for delaying what you have no intention to perform. Oh! why so deaf, and so relentless to the calls of love?

Belrai. I suppose you are not ignorant of the friendship which subsists between me and my dearest cousin; and you ought not to be surprized, when I deny to receive what the smiles of fortune would bestow, while she is unable to be a partaker.

Muly

Muly. Injurious fortune!—And, Oh! my guardian angel, too remissive of thy charge! why had I not some secret warnings of my future fate? Why have I lived to this black hour?

Belrai. Unjustly you accuse fortune: But know, prince, she has been more kind to you than what your gratitude deserves. Suiters have died at my feet, without the least mark of my regard; yet you—

Muly. Forgive me, princess, forgive your slave—your lover! Here do I bend my knees, and prostrate myself before you.—Pardon my words, they were unguarded—do it, or see me breathe my last groan at your feet.

Belrai. I pardon you. Rise, rise! disdain to bow thy knee, or you will do more than ever the sword of your enemies could extort from you.

Muly. Goodness, like yours, Madam, is seldom to be found. Accept my thanks: gratitude overflows my breast, and, like a torrent, sweeps every impediment away: Yet with the hope of your forgiveness, I say, that your charms have bound me more effectually than all the chains with which the unhappy captives are loaded.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lord, Abdomor is arrived, and has brought expresses from Fez to you and the princess, which require an immediate answer: he waits for you in the court.

Belrai. Enough; let us see him, and know whether by fame his prowess was partially represented, when she registered him in her records as more valiant than the warriors of the present age. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.

Enter BELRAIZIA and ZATILDA.

Belrai. I've seen him! I've seen Abdomor! But, O Gods! with what emotion did my bosom swell, when first I cast my eyes upon him! I will not pretend to represent what I felt; it would be impossible; but you, princess, who have experienced the dominions of the captivating passion, may guess. Besides, in my fond judgment,

ment, whoever has seen the graceful form of Abdomor, cannot be surpris'd to learn the effect that it has had upon my sensibility.

Zatil. Blessed be you with Abdomor? and may Hymen soon happily unite you to the dear possessor of your heart.

Belrai. Alas! I am not so happy as to imagine that I have made any impression on the brave Abdomor. My love is scarce a moment older than despair.

Zatil. Think not so. The God of chaste desires, unknown to you, may have fixed his unerring arrows in his heart; and Abdomor may love you with an ardour equal to your own.

Belrai. The duty which he owes to his prince, removes that thought far from my breast: He loves him with that generosity which characterises genuine friendship, and which, by making him prefer the tranquility of his prince to his own happiness, will undoubtedly stimulate him to sacrifice to that principle, every ambitious view that might be generated by the knowledge of my attachment to him, and the union that might naturally follow.

Zatil. You know not but love may overturn his friendship: It can operate many ways, but friendship only one. I would advise you, therefore, to reveal to him the true state of your soul; he can pity, if not love.

Belrai. That is the only enterprize that I am afraid of; for should he ever imagine that I love him, so far will he be from thinking himself obliged, that he will rather hate me for my dissimulation to the prince whom he infinitely loves.

Zatil. Then calm your disturbed soul; continue still to love him; be constant, and leave the rest to fate.

Belrai. I shall love him, and be as constant to him as the turtle-dove is to her young. Death may divide us, but not the power of man. But alas! the king—I must not tell.—

Zatil. What of him? what cruel fate awaits us? Speak, Belraiza, I am ready for the blow. Oh! be quick, and tell me; something awful is to be seen in your looks. Distract me not with cruel delays.

Belrai.

Belrai. No, I will no longer keep you in suspense. Know our irrevocable doom is already past, tho' not executed, yet we must be miserable. Your physicians have given in their verdict, that nothing but melancholy afflicts you; and the king and my father already begin to execute their authority, and have agreed that your feigned illness shall not be any longer a pretence for affronting a prince whose alliance is an honour to our family. Judge what a crush this is! what a blow to our resolution!

Zatil. I am undone, in spite of all you have promised me; in spite of your own distant inclinations, you will be forced to be his wife!

Belrai. Passion; when it is violent, like mine, is never unaccompanied by courage; and I have resolved to defy all dangers, rather than yield to an embrace, the idea of which is grown odious, or make my Zatilda wretched, by utterly depriving her of even a possibility of being otherwise.

Zatil. Where is comfort? surely it is not on earth! Oh! then, whether can the wretched Zatilda fly! Who can resist paternal tears, or defy kingly power? None! Why then need I linger thus: Come death! come, come, and end my sorrows in the tomb!—

Belrai. Believe me, Zatilda, that I am resolved: for be assured, death with all his plagues, not all the powers of heaven and earth combined, shall force me to be his wife. Hell! hell is not so dreadful as the very thought of being his wife: And I call just heaven, and every saint to witness, I never will. If I do, may all the plagues of earth and hell fall on me: May I be ruined and thrown off to scorn,—driven round the world, with no companion but my infamy, and not one friend to pity or relieve me, till some unlooked for, horrid kind of death overtakes me, and sinks my soul, with all its load of guilt, beyond the reach of mercy!—

Zatil. Fly his destructive charms—Be calm; some unwary passenger comes this way: Keep up your spirits; dissemble well. [Exit.]

Enter a Gentleman.

Gen. Ladies, my prince sends me with his duty to you;

you; and as he knows you are together, he entreats the favour of you to continue so, and admit for a moment of his presence, as he has something to communicate.

Zatil. Let your prince know that I should take it ill if he should have so indifferent an opinion of my judgement, as not to assure himself of welcome here, whenever he has a leisure hour to afford us his conversation. As for my cousin, he is doubtless satisfied in her inclinations.

Belrai. Madam, if he is not, I know of no person so proper to complain to as yourself, who on all occasions are so much his friend. You may inform your master you have seen me with the princess, where I design to remain some time, and should be well pleased if he would come and join company with us. [Exit Gentleman.]

Belrai. Oh, *Zatilda*, had the brave *Abdomor* returned my passion with an equal ardour, what is it I would not have endured?—what dangers could I not dare?—what sufferings could I not endure with joy, to keep him mine? Pain then would be unfelt, want lose its sting, and even death a blessing for his sake!—My humble wishes aspire no higher than to be wretched with him.—Yet that the cruel heavens deny! Miserable *Belraizia*! where—where will thy sorrows end?

Zatil. Cease to lament, the generous *Abdomor*, I dare promise, will love with equal ardour; it is natural for his noble soul to pity.—Put on the mask, *Mulyzedea* comes.

Enter MULYZEDEN.

Muly. I come to tell you tidings, which will make you pity me, if you have the least regard to my injured honour.

Belrai. We have a veneration and respect to a prince of your abilities; and we expect, since you arrived here, we have convinced you of our esteem; and we hope, if you have any thing to inform us of, that you will proceed without any preamble.

Muly. Ah, Madam! I have reason to believe that fortune having begun to afflict me by your coldness, designs to accumulate my sorrows, in depriving me of every

ry thing which could afford me consolation. Abdomor, that friend whom, next to the adorable Belraizia, had the greatest share in my heart, of late avoids my presence, shuns my caresses; and when I ask the cause, replies not but with sighs. This morning, pressing with all the earnestness of friendship, to which I joined commands, to know what had occasioned this so sudden change, after a thousand evasions, which he found were vain, he told me, with a countenance which spoke at once despair and grief, that his life was mine, but not his secret. I thought this answer as far from justice as it was from kindness; and let him know I had not been guilty of such reserves to him, which, between souls united, were treasonable to the laws of friendship. Our tempers being too liable to passion, a few hot words ensued, and he departed from my chamber. This usage, tho' it much troubles me, I could forgive from Abdomor; but it seems he is not so reconcilable. About an hour since he sent me a letter by his page, which please to judge the meaning of.

(Gives the Letter to Belraizia, who reads.)

" To Prince Mulyzeden.

" My presence being no way serviceable to you
" at this court; and the repose of my future life calling
" me, with the utmost expedition to Fez, I humbly en-
" treat your permission to return thither.

" I know better what is owing to my duty, and the
" obligations you have heaped upon me, than to oppose
" your will; but hope the same goodness to which I al-
" ready stand so far indebted, will influence you not to
" command my stay, since my immediate departure is
" absolutely necessary to prevent me from being

" The most miserable of your slaves,

" ABDOMOR."

What has he found so disobliging in this court, that should make him so impatient to remove from it? Or what obligation can he have left behind him in Fez, equal to those

those he has to his prince, who has bought his utmost services at a price so noble as his friendship?

Zatil. Agree by no means to his leaving my father's court; surely he cannot want for any repose, but what can be enjoyed here; besides, his duty for his prince ought to prevail upon him to stay; and I beg you not to comply with his ungenerous request. It is black ingratitude for to leave his prince in this strange court; future events are not yet known.

Muly. Tho' I approve of your reasons, yet they cannot influence me so far as to force his stay, if persuasions will not win him. Belraizia, I have a favour to entreat of you, the grant of which will infinitely oblige me.

Belrai. Say on, for if I can I will oblige you.

Muly. As you seem a little interested in this affair, I believe it would not be improper, to enquire of Abdomor the reason why he desires to leave us. Perhaps his esteem for a princess of your accomplishments may induce him to reveal more than I have been able to draw from him.

Belrai. I will undertake for to perform this task.

Muly. Farewell!—The Tempest in my mind rages with a violence too fierce to permit me to add more.

Zatil. Lovers! let neither jealousy nor strife,
Deprive you of the happiness of life.

[Exit.]

ACT H. SCENE I.

Enter BELRAIZIA, solus.

IT is now impossible that Abdomor, the accomplished Abdomor, can ever think the wretched Belraizia an object worthy of his serious attention: his heart despises the indiscretion of my conduct! Pity is the most tender sentiment he can regard me with! And Oh! how distant is that from which I would inspire! Yet why should I

B 2

despair?

despair? I am perhaps the only person that judges my actions with so much severity. Mulyzeden finds enough in me to love, and why may I not hope his friend may be of his opinion? My eyes are still the same, and every charm which used to adorn me maintains its lustre with undiminished brightness. Fool that I am, and too liable to entertain the vain delusions of fictitious hope; 'tis not in nature, 'tis not in reason, to expect the brave Abdomor should love me.—

Enter MULYZEDEN and ABDOMOR.

BELRAIZIA seeing them goes to the back of the stage.

Muly. Say no more, Abdomor, say no more; I am now convinced that all the friendship thou ever pretendest to me was but flattery;—the names of prince, patron, friend, but words of course, and had no other meaning but to please me with the sound.

Abdo. Sir, I conjure you do not rend my soul with unjust suspicions: By heaven! by all that we adore above! or love below! your friendship is the only pride, the only hope I have on earth; and if you deprive me of your regard, I will be forlorn beyond conception.

Muly. Why then dost thou conceal the secret from me? I will never believe thou lovest me till I obtain this proof. I know too well thy honest generous nature, to imagine it can be ought thou would'st be ashamed to own; but if it were, to me thou mightest disclose it. Humanity is liable to failings, and if some secret vice has unwarily insinuated itself into thy heart, I shall not censure it with so much severity as thou thyself would'st do, having many more and greater of my own.

Abdo. Oh! Sir, forbear! you are too God-like good. Your wonderful condescension to an unworthy slave, makes me more hateful to myself. Believe it, my most honoured Prince, the crime you would discover is of so black a kind, that you could not know it without detestation: This once favoured Abdomor, by you and all mankind, must be contemned, abhorred! and if there were a punishment more terrible, that would be inflicted on me!

Muly.

Muly. Thy words, amazing as they are, can never make me think thou could'st be guilty of a crime I could not pardon: hadst thou conspired against my life, half this penance would more than wash the stain:—But I will no further press thee; keep still the secret in thy burden'd breast; but let me keep thee with me! Do not leave me, and I ask no more!

Abdo. Oh unjust Gods! why am I made this wretch? Why deemed to bear more than a mortal sufferance can sustain? Why am I forced against my inclinations to wrong such royal goodness? Ye gods! strike, strike me dead with your avenging thunders! Lightenings blast me! Earth open wide and swallow me at once to your infernal caverns! Snatch, snatch me hence, and bear me quick to hell! There is not a devil there so damned as I!—But hold: these coward-like complaints avail not to erase my foul ingratitude, my horrid perjury. I have the means myself to end my tortures, and chastise my crimes!

(Offers to stab himself, but Mulyzeden holds him.)

Thus, thus, my Prince! I will revenge you on your worst of foes.—

Muly. It is enough, Abdomor, it is enough; I need no more to make me guess at your misfortune: I am too well assured of your honour to believe you would injure a Prince who loves you, by an act in which your will had part: No, no; the crime which has occasioned this despair, is an involuntary one.—There are no rules, alas! to limit love, and I must learn to be insensible of Beltrazza's charms myself, before I refuse to pity another, who has felt their influence.

Abdo. May hell, when I injure you in your right of love, blast me with all her plagues, and sink me far beyond the reach of mercy!

Muly. Yet, Abdomor, what raises my suspicions, is your being here alone: Where are your attendants?

Abdo. I left them at the palace, and the reason why I am here alone is, because I rose much earlier than I used to do; and to avoid the morning salutations which the court thought it their duty to pay to me, I rather chose to take a turn in the gardens.

Muly. Well, Abdomor, I shall no more disturb you in the enjoyment of a solitude which you prefer to the society of a prince who loves you; only remember, that there is a mighty difference between crimes enforced by a compulsive fate, and those which we are guilty of merely thro' the obstinacy of our own will: the unhappy passion you lament, is not your fault, but your misfortune; and if you offer to lay violent hands on yourself, you not only anticipate the decree of heaven, but in the most tender part injure me, by depriving me of a subject I esteem the most capable of serving me, and commit a sin both unpardonable by the gods and me. [Exit.

Belraizia comes forward, and Abdomor tries to shun her.

Belrai. My Lord, you do very wisely in shunning the presence of a princess you are about so highly to disoblige.

Abdo. How, madam? were there a possibility of my being guilty of a crime like that, I should deserve far worse a punishment than it is in the power of a goodness so divine as yours to inflict. But since you have taxed me with it, permit me to entreat the cause.

Belrai. The cause is plain; if Mulyzeden has not wrong'd you in his report, you grow weary of us, and are impatient to return to Fez.

Abdo. The short time I have been here has shewn me so much to admire, that if there were a perfect heaven to be found on earth, it is in this court that I should seek it; and it is so much my misfortune, that I am obliged by indispensable necessity to leave it, that I much doubt I shall never be able to erase the melancholy it will occasion.

Belrai. Did you in reality think, what your complaisance obliged you to say, that no consideration would be of sufficient force to take you from a prince who cannot be happy when you are not with him.

Abdo. I am so little capable of being of use to my prince, madam, on any score, that without being guilty of an injustice to himself, he cannot regret my absence: —tho' if it were otherwise, he will soon be put in possession of a blessing which will leave no room for any second wish:

wish: Whatever this world can boast, cannot be worth one thought from him who will enjoy the utmost heaven can bestow in the divine Belraizia.

Belrai. But till that day at least you ought not to forsake him, and who can tell how long a space of time may be between this instant now and that? You look with wonder in your countenance, but knowing you so strictly devoted to your prince, I long have wished to discourse you on this theme, and should be more obliged than words can thank you for, would you endeavour to direct his thoughts from one, who cannot love him, nor, but with horror inconceivable, can ever yield to be his wife.

Abdo. Not love him, madam! grant heaven my ears may deceive me! Not love a prince who has all the perfections that man can boast of! a prince who dies for you! and to whom you have given so many instances that you would reward his passion.

Belrai. It was by my father and the king's command; for know, my heart had no part in what I said, nor shall all their power oblige me longer to disguise the truth; I cannot love and will never consent to—

[*Interrupting her.*]

Abdo. Hold, princess! I conjure you by the gods, recall that rash resolve, which too late consideration may cause you to repent;—you cannot find in the race of man a prince so worthy as Mulyzedon; the strictest honour, justice, truth and goodness, are the ingredients of his god-like soul! As for his form, oh princess! is it not noble? What a manly majesty dwells in his air? what a sweetness in his smiles? and with all this, a love so true, so perfect, and so pure, that it approaches to the nearest possible perfection which is supposed to reign among celestial beings.

Belrai. I own the merits of prince Mulyzedon; but if you have ever been acquainted with that passion, you will know that it is not without reason, that the god of it is painted blind.

Abdo. Madam, can you profess to have the least knowledge of love, yet seem insensible of my prince's charms. --[*Kneels.*] But here, most adorable princess, let me entreat you to consider well, e'er you resolve to make

my

my prince unhappy: Think what a breach of honour and of justice it would be to throw him from these high-raised hopes to which your promises have exalted him;—think that he cannot outlive the cruel certainty of your unkindness, and if you will not love, let pity move you never to let this fatal knowledge reach his ears;—for me, not all the torments which the damned endure, shall force me to reveal it.

Enter MULYZEDEN as having mistaken the meaning of Abdomor's last words, who runs at him to kill him, but Belraizia gets between them.

Muly. Nor—nor—needest thou, traitor! reveal it; my eyes and ears have but too well informed themselves, and thus urge me to vengeance.

Belrai. Check this rash folly of an ungoverned and a causeless fury, or thro' my breast give thou the wound.

Muly. You do well, madam, to defend the man who has declared a passion for you; I wish you had the same charity for all who loves you!

Belrai. Your words are too mysterious for me to comprehend the meaning of; and all I can gather either from them, or your behaviour, is to me affrontive, and to your friend injurious.

Enter ROTLAND and Guards.

Muly. Sire, I entreat you, whose authority can act, as the story I have to tell will justify the accusation, to order that traitor into close confinement, until a worse punishment is inflicted on him.

Rot. Take him to prison, guards; be quick and execute my orders; and as for you, Belraizia, you must retire to your apartment, and not stir from thence without permission, or till I get the senate convened, where both shall be judged, and no lenity to either party shewn.

Belrai. I go; but prince remember, you are by this rash step, more distant from what you desire, than ever you was, and I will prefer death before your loathsome bed.

[Exit guarded.]

SCENE

S C E N E II

Enter ZATILDA and BELRAIZIA.

Zatil. Racks, torments, jealousies! nay, all the plagues hell can inflict, are nothing to the wounding news I have to tell: Alas! Belraizia, I am commanded, nay, forced by my father and Mulyzeden, to dive into your sentiments, and if possible, to find out the truth of the whole affair betwixt you and Abdomor; because the posture the prince found him in, has made them all positive that you have been made acquainted with his passion; and nothing can convince them that you had not only listened to, but also approved of his courtship, if you do not instantly consent to ratify the contract with Mulyzeden. The most excruciating pain that can be inflicted, I would gladly have suffered to avert the blow; but I fear you will be obliged to comply, to the eternal ruin of my peace.

Belrai. I protest I will not; rather would I die a thousand deaths than make you so unhappy, if no other obstacle but my friendship to you had interposed; but I love Abdomor, and have every reason to believe that he returns my love with equal ardour, tho' his generosity obliges him to conceal it from me. No threats! no tortures! shall force me to act so contrary both to my own wishes and yours, who of all the world art dearest to me. Dissipate such fears, for I will never be his wife: But have you learn'd any thing concerning Abdomor.

Zatil. Nothing, but that he is in close prison, under a guard of fifty armed men, all ready, if he offers to effect an escape, to stop his progress by instant death: They are so much devoted to the prince's service, that they disdain the highest bribe; and the king is not yet resolved what sentence to pass on that unhappy nobleman.

Belrai. All the dreadful examples of jealous love now enter my distracted brain! I see him bleed! dying for my sake! the unfeeling executioner gives the blow, regardless of his cries! He struggles for death! Hark, he

cries

eries for me! I'll to him! He's gone! he's dead! Alas! alas!

[Faints.]

Zatil. He is not dead, although confined in prison. My father is a lover of justice, and when he judges, equity and honour are his dictators: Fear not then, Belraizia; his only child shall plead in Abdomor's behalf, and do her best to make you happy.

Belrai. Then, dear princess, permit me to reveal the secret of your passion for Mulyzeden; that, when once known, will oblige the king not to take it ill that I refused to do, what would when done, have made his daughter wretched. My father will not dare to force my inclinations against the interest of his princess, and Mulyzeden cannot but glory in the exchange. All of us would be happy in our several wishes, would you consent.

Zatil. You urge in vain, for rather will I die than proffer love.

Enter an Attendant, who delivers a letter to Belraizia and retires.

Belrai. Gods! what can this mean? who can be the author?

Zatil. It is from Abdomor; but open and let the contents be known.

Belraizia reads.

" To Belraizia.

" I believe it is needless to inform you, that the posture
" I was found in by my prince, has occasioned a jealousy
" of me. But, I confess, I have not generosity enough
" to suffer so great a misfortune as the loss of his friend-
" ship, without wishing to be pitied by her for whom I
" am content to endure greater ills. Mulyzeden accuses
" me, most excellent princess, of adoring you; and oh!
" I acknowledge the involuntary crime! But as my lips
" have never offended by any presumptuous declarations,

" 1

" I hope (though he cannot) goodness like yours will
" pardon a transgression.

" I am but this moment released from my confine-
" ment, and in a few hours must leave this court for ever;
" All I entreat for myself is your forgiveness; and that
" you will believe the crime for which I am banished.
" I never should have had the boldness to reveal, had I
" not been assured you would have known it without
" me.

" My next request is, that you would do that justice
" to my prince, which his unbounded passion, and ex-
" cellent qualifications makes him merit; And my last
" to the gods, that the choicest blessings in their power
" to give, may be the portion of you both, whatever is
" decreed for

" The unhappy

" ARDMOR."

I love him too well, and shall not lose him. All the
remonstrances of honour, grandeur, reputation, are now
silenced by the more powerful calls of love. Since he is
banished, I am resolved to be the partner of his exile,
whatever may ensue; and as he sets out in a few hours,
I have, dear princess, to beg of you the favour to pro-
cure for me a suit of clothes, such as our slaves wear,
and so by that means, I may mix among his train as one
of his attendants; for it is now become impossible for me
to live without him.

Zatil. Since you say nothing can dissuade you from
this undertaking, which seems so dangerous, I will pro-
cure what you have asked, and help you all I can for to
succeed.

Belrai. May heaven pour her best blessings on your
head, and always keep you and the unhappy bed of sor-
row, far removed from each other: It is by your good-
ness that I will shortly see the man I love, and forever
avoid the sight of Mulyzedon, whose look I hate as hell.

[Exit,

SCENE

S C E N E III.

Enter ROTLAND, FERDINAND, MULYZEDEN, and Attendants

Fer. Sir, my daughter is fled, and I believe it is with Abdomor, and at his instigation. Oh! tell me what is to be done: no time must be lost: Resolve, my royal master; for each hour's delay bring certain ruin on my unhappy head.

Rot. Art thou certain that she is fled; because till I am assured of it, nothing can be done: It would too much injure that nobleman, if we should harbour the least suspicion of his being guilty of so great a crime, while innocence sits on his brow.

Muly. We were too well informed of her flight, before we presumed to ask your royal aid; we have been in search of her these two long tedious hours, yet cannot trace her steps, nor find out where she's gone, unless it's with Abdomor. And what the more raises our suspicions is, my finding them in the garden alone, and Abdomor in the posture I have already informed you of; so necessity demands you to send with speed, a party of your horse in pursuit of that traitor: haste, or he will escape.

Rot. Haste then, and in my name order a party of horsemen to be sent in pursuit of Abdomor; and if he is got, bring him to the Senate house, where I will attend.

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E IV. *The Senate House.*

Enter Rotland, Ferdinand, Mulyzedden, Senators, Abdomor, Zatlida, Belraizia in slaves dress, and Guards.

Rot. Abdomor, a charge is laid against you by Ferdinand and your prince, stating, that you have, in defiance of the laws of justice and humanity, stole away the princess Belraizia.

Abdo.

Abdo. Most honoured king, I am innocent! that charge is false! is forged! great gods direct me.

Rot. Your words are not right grounded, we cannot credit what you have said; for if the princess was not in your company, it was on your account she fled, and you have some place agreed on for your meeting. Take him to the rack, the villain banters us.

As the Guards are leading him to the rack, Belraizia presents herself to the King.

Belrai. And is it for the princess Belraizia, that the noble Abdomor must endure the rack; if so, let him be remanded back, I can produce the princess, and clear his innocence.

The King signs to the Guards, and they bring back Abdomor.

Fer. Slave, what have you to say in defence of Abdomor, and what do you know concerning Belraizia.

Belrai. My lords, if I prove the princess' flight to have been unknown to Abdomor: Have you any other crime to accuse him of.

Rot. If you do so, Abdomor, is at liberty; nothing further being alledged against him.

Belraizia discovers herself.

Belrai. See here then; see here that Belraizia whom you seek, and whom nothing but the guilt of remitting an innocent person to suffer for a crime she alone is guilty of, should have been obliged to discover herself either to you or any others; and be assured it is only Abdomor I will love.

Fer. It is not this shameful accusing of yourself that ought to screen that traitor from the hand of justice.

Muly. It is plain he's guilty; for tho' the princess has so ingloriously condescended to yield to his desires, I never can believe she could be brought to it without professions, such as she thought merited her compassion.

Belrai. It's false, and thou, unbelieving prince, deserveest not to be blessed with such a friend as Abdomor;

C

and

and there is a testimony [*Gives Abdomor's Letter to the King*] that he never had so much as declared his passion for me, much less had importuned me to go with him.

Zatil. And here I solemnly declare, that Abdomor was noways concerned in the princess' flight, nor was it at his instigation; for it was Belraizia, and only her, that did invent it; and I procured to her the dress she fled with.

Rot. Abdomor, since it appears you had no share in Belraizia's flight (however prejudicial it may be to my interest) I recall the sentence formerly passed upon you, and from this moment you are free.

Muly. [*in a rage*] Your Majesty may, when you please, revoke your own decrees; but neither heaven nor earth shall debar me from the execution of mine. I have vowed the traitor's death, and thus I make it good. [*Draws and runs at Abdomor, who also draws and defends himself.*]

Abdo. There was a time when I would have welcomed death; but now I have cause to value life, and must and will defend it for Belraizia's sake, tho' against you, next to her, dearest to my soul.

Muly. Villain thou liest, nor shall thy flattery move me to forgiveness. [*They fight.*]

Rot. Guards part them, and conduct Abdomor to prison; not that he is any longer to be treated as a criminal, but only to keep him from his prince's fury.

Exit Rot. Abdo. and part of the guards.

Fer. Fly, rebel, for to my blood you are become a shame: Begone, lest to perform some desperate action you do tempt me. How dost thou dare for to reject such noble offers made you by a prince of such accomplishments. But for your none-compliance with my will, I disown thee for my daughter; and from this hour you have no interest or connection with me. Go, vile miscreant, wander thro' the world a vagabond; and may every generous humane heart banish you from their hospitable doors.

Belrai. If fate has said so, I must submit; and tho' I am deprived of your love, and driven from your unhospitable

pitiable doors, yet I am not deprived of what virtues adorn our sex, and they will protect me from these ruiners of our sex call'd libertines, and also recommend me to the generous and humane; and to the world I will proclaim my innocence.

Zatil. Ferdinand, you should excuse her, seeing it was love, that unconquerable passion, which compelled her to act so contrary to your will; and remember love cannot be bridled.

Muly. Cease, Sir, any longer to reproach her—For if she will permit me to espouse her cause, by giving me that happiness my vows long since made due, all she has done for Abdomor shall be forgot.

Belrai. No, Sir, I have gone too far in the race of passion to go back: I own your generosity, but 'tis Abdomor alone I'll love.

Fer. Degenerate girl, unworthy the regard of this noble prince!—But in the punishment I will inflict on thee, he shall perceive how I resent the indignity thou hast offered him.—Here, guards, bear her to my apartment, and let her be shifted of these dishonourable rags, these shameful witnesses of her folly.

Belrai. I go with courage; lead me to my fate; I will not resent, nor try to evade my punishment; for if I die, it is in virtue's cause. [Exit.]

SCENE V.

Where Zatilda is seen repofing herself on a couch.

Enter ROTLAND.

Rot. Here, ye sister furies, devils, plagues, enter my breast; take full possession; give me no peace till life, and all the sweets of it, become to me a bitter potion. Gods, can I live, when death has robb'd me of my best friend—my best subject—I may say of my best part of life.—Oh! Ferdinand, why hast thou left me in this time of trouble! Why hast thou fled, and left me to bear the heavy burden of a crown I cannot support under

such a weight. My subjects are keen for rebellion. My life is not a moment safe; for plots, treasons and rebellions are laid for me: But when Ferdinand was with me, he defended me from the rude attacks of conspirators; plots he discovered e'er they were well formed; but now he's gone, and I must die beneath the assassin's sword. Yet this is but a small part of my woes, when compared to what I suffer on Zatilda's account. Alas! she loves Mulyzeden, but he returns it not; that generous, brave, unhappy prince, pitied my daughter when I proposed the matter to him; but he told me with a briny tear, it was not his destiny to love her: He pities her, but cannot love her; and oh! how will it pierce her tender breast, when I impart the sad tidings to her. [*Starting back. Zatilda comes forward with a drawn dagger.*] Ha! what does this mean! Mercy kind heavens, my daughter.

Zatil. It is your daughter who was happy once, but now miserable; and mad despair obliges me to lodge this dagger in my heart. I die: I die. [*Stabs herself.*] Thus, thus I do revenge myself on life, my worst of foes.—Oh! tell Mulyzeden that I merited his love—that I died a martyr for his sake: and——[*Dies.*]

Rot. Heaven and earth, where will this dire tragedy end!—My daughter dead.—Murdered by her own hand.—Oh. Hell, in thee a wretch like me cannot be found, persecuted by the hands of the gods, and despised by men. Unless some pity on my pains be shed, the frosty grave soon will be my bed. What, live on such terms with a world as these. No, that cannot be; I'll have recourse to death. But stop, I am a king, beloved by some, and I am answerable to the gods for my conduct. I'll bear under my misfortunes as a man, and feel them as a man; for coward complaints avail me not. [*Enter some Slaves.*] Ho, slaves, attend the call of your misfortunate master: Carry furth the sad remains of my unhappy daughter, and to my loneful palace admit no visitors, but let me spend the rest of my miserable days in silent despair; my hours will heavily roll on, deprived of rest by day, or sleep by night. All shall be dismal as the shades below; as dark as hell, as sad as death.

[*Exit*]

SCENE VI.

Enter MULYZEDEN with two daggers.

Muly. She's false. Oh! heavens, who can let such perjury pass. My Belraizia, my promised wife false.— Oh, women, women, first made to be a curse to man and to yourselves, false and perjured. Murder, damnation, hell and torments, will I bear it.—Gods is it possible—to be made a sport of by a woman—a false woman—a perjured woman. No, my soul cannot bear such indignities offered to my honour; but there is no remedy. Justice drops her head, but oppression and wrong rear their standards up; yet will I find a remedy in death. Come on, ye gods, I now defy you and your power. Come on ye devils, and all ye powers of heaven and hell; I'm now beyond all plagues which you can inflict. Oh happy dagger, oh happy hour which relieves me from this prison of woe. Now, now its done, [*Stabs himself,*] the devils drag me to the bottom.—Horror—perjury—murder—have all conspired my ruin. Oh gods forgive—I cannot send up my claims to heaven—they shut their ears against me. I have nothing to do but despair; and think of torments, horrors, tumults, chaos.—Hell, hell opens her mouth to swallow me to quick damnation—Oh! oh!—[*Dies.*]

Enter MALDINY and FLOREZ.

Mal. Dead—sure it cannot be: Alas it is too true; he is gone, murdered by the assassin's sword. Oh, heaven, why with your avenging thunders did you not strike the murderers dead. Dire misfortune—Oh, my prince—my country—

Flo. By Jupiter, I swear I shall have vengeance. Morroco shall tremble within her walls; and for this cursed action her streets shall sweeten with the blood of her inhabitants; not one soul shall escape. I'll chase them to the utmost verge of earth; nay to the very brink of hell. The child—the widow—the subject—and the king shall die, yet all will be too little to satisfy our injured prince's ghost.

ghost. Belraizia too shall die for her perjury, her plighted faith, she shall be punished; and if I spare either the aged or the young, may hell not spare to pour eternal torments on my head.

Mal. Let us with speed bend our way to Fez, and inform our king of the cruel assassination of his son; and if he has a father's soul, he will draw, and make every loyal subject draw their swords for to revenge our prince's death.

Flo. May every generous, humane heart, and may the gods be on our side; for it is just revenge, and nothing more we seek.

Mal. Revenge, revenge be my eternal theme.

Flo. Perish Morocco, perish Morocco, be ever mine.

[Exit.]

SCENE VII.

*Enter ABDOMOR and BELRAIZIA **

Abdo. My dear Belraizia, were it to obtain
The unsummed wealth of Pluto, or to gain
The sovereignty of earth, without expence
Of blood or sweat, without the least pretence
Of danger, my ambition would despise
The easy conquest of so great a prize,
If purchas'd by thy discontent, or by
The poorest tear that trickles from thine eye.
My dear Belraizia, let no false suggestion
Abuse thy passion, or presume to question.
My dearest love, though honour bids us part,
Yet honour cannot rob thee of my heart.
Honour that calls me with her loud alarms,
Will bring me back with triumph to thine arms.

[Going, but she holds him.]

Belrai. My Abdomor, my Abdomor, my dear,
And wilt thou go and leave Belraizia here?

Wilt

* This scene happens after Abdomor is summoned by the King of Fez, to attend him in a war which he proclaimed against the King of Morocco.

Wilt thou forsake me then? and can these tears
Not interceed betwixt thy deafen'd ears
And my sad suit? Canst thou, oh! canst thou go,
And leave thy poor distressed Belraizia so?
Belraizia sues, Belraizia does implore;
Belraizia begs, that never begg'd before.
I'll not lose thee, I will hold thee fast,
In spite of Honour and her nine days blast.
Your former acts have given sufficient proof
To all the world; your valour's known enough.
Can prayers obtain no place? By this dear hand,
The sacred pledge of our conjugal band;
By all the pleasures of our dearest love;
By heaven, and all the heavenly powers above,
By that, forsake me not; altho' the rest
Prevail not, grant this first, this last request.

Abdo. My dear Belraizia, thy desires never
Gain said my will, till now. Do not persevere
To crave the boon I cannot grant; forbear
To urge me, resolution has no ear.
Weep not, my love; let not these drops of thine,
That trickle from so fair an eye divine,
Think to succeed: Cheer up, a smile or two
Will make me half a conqueror ere I go.
Shine forth, and let no envious cloud benight
The glorious lustre of so fair a sight.
Doubt not my life, the justice of my cause
That brings me on, will quit me with applause.
Fear not that such a blessing, such a wife,
Was e'er intended for so short a life.
Expect my safe return, as quick as glorious;
My genius tells me I shall live victorious.

Belrai. Mine, mine you are, and you can undertake
No danger, but Belraizia must partake.
And if you be endangered, then
Belraizia shall be present, even when
The strokes fall thickest; and Belraizia shall
Suffer what to Abdonor may befall.

Belraizia

2

THE FATAL SECRET, &c.

Belraizia in your greatest pain shall smart;
Your blood shall trickle from her panting heart.

[Exit omnes.]

F I N I S.

N. B. The author begs leave to inform the Subscribers, and the public in general, that his next work will be entitled, *The Britons glorious effort for Liberty*, which he hopes will be patronized by them.